

## Private Well and/or Private Sewage System Evaluation

The Environmental Health Division can provide an evaluation of your private well, your private sewage system or both.

### < Inspector & Laboratory Qualifications:

The Environmental Health Sanitarians performing these services are certified by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce as Certified Soil Testers (CST) and Privately Owned Wastewater Treatment System Inspectors (POWTS). As CST and POWTS inspectors, the sanitarians inspect the installation of new and replacement private sewage systems and evaluate soil and site conditions for private sewage system installations.

The sanitarians are certified by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) as Private Well Inspectors. Under this certification the sanitarians collect water samples, perform evaluations of existing wells for compliance with NR 812 Well Construction and Pump Installation Code requirements, and can require the abandonment of existing unused wells.

The Environmental Health Division laboratory is certified by the WDNR for nitrate analysis and by the Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection for bacteriological testing of water using the membrane filter and Colilert testing procedures.

### < How to Request Services:

Upon receipt of the “*Private Water System and/or Private Sewage System Evaluation Application*” and fee, the sanitarian will call to schedule an appointment. These calls are usually made between 8:00 and 9:30 a.m., Monday through Friday. The owner, tenant or representative must be at the property to meet the sanitarian if the property is occupied. To perform a thorough evaluation, the sanitarian must have access to the basement.

### < What Happens During an Inspection?

**Private Water Evaluation:** The evaluation consists of an inspection of the visible components of the private water system. The system’s construction and location are evaluated for compliance with Wisconsin Administrative Code NR 812, Well Construction and Pump Installation requirements. Deficiencies identified will require correction to bring the private water system into compliance. The evaluation includes the collection of a water sample from the private well and its bacteriological analysis. Although a septic system inspection is not included in the private water evaluation, any obvious evidence that sewage is backing up into the

building or is being discharged to the ground surface will be viewed as a violation of the Waukesha County Sanitary Ordinance.

**Private Sewage System Evaluation:** A visual inspection of the private sewage system is conducted to verify that all water-carried waste enters the septic tank, that no sewage effluent is visibly being discharged onto the ground surface or backing up into the building, and to determine if minimum isolation distances are maintained. The observation pipe or fresh air vent is used to check the operating status of the soil absorption system. To provide an evaluation that is representative of the operating condition of the existing private sewage disposal system, do not pump the septic tank before the inspection is made.

**Private Water & Sewage System Evaluation:** Combines the evaluations as described above.

### < Your Evaluation Report:

If the request is made as part of a refinancing or real estate transaction, please submit the “*Private Water System and/or Private Sewage System Evaluation Application*” a minimum of 2 weeks before your deadline. Following the evaluation, a written report will be prepared summarizing the observations made from the inspection and departmental files. For private sewage system installations from 1980 to present, departmental files may contain soil data and plans for the private sewage system serving the property.

### < Other Information:

This evaluation does not include an inspection of the septic tank. If the septic tank has not been recently pumped, you may want to have it pumped and inspected by a licensed pumper or plumber to document its capacity and to inspect the tank for structural integrity and baffle condition. The pumper or plumber should check for evidence of drainback from the soil absorption system or higher than normal liquid levels in the septic tank that may indicate potential problems with the soil absorption system.

### < Additional Services:

The Environmental Health Lab can test water for iron, fluoride, hardness, chloride and nitrates at a reasonable cost. For additional information on water testing, soils, private sewage systems, isolation distances, or to request a “*Preliminary Site Evaluation Application*” for a home improvement such as a building addition, house remodeling, outbuilding, swimming pool, deck, or shed, please call the Environmental Health Division at (262)-896-8300.

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Applicable to Properties Served by a  
Private Water Supply  
and/or  
Private Sewage System



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